

## **Combined Team Conference Call Summary December 14, 2009**

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### **Combined Team Members Participating:**

Christine Bradbury, Forest Service  
Frances Cassirer, State of Idaho  
Vic Coggins, State of Oregon  
Maura Laverty, Forest Service  
Keith Lawrence, NPT  
Mike Lopez, NPT  
Curt Mack, NPT

Josh O'Brien, Forest Service Contractor  
Chans O'Brien, Forest Service  
Suzanne Rainville, Forest Service  
Tim Schommer, Forest Service  
Pattie Soucek, Forest Service  
Dale Toweill, State of Idaho

Facilitated by: Susan Hayman, North Country Resources, Inc.

Summary: Pattie Soucek (with content contributed by Susan Hayman)

### **Opening Remarks**

Suzanne Rainville, Payette Forest Supervisor, welcomed the team and thanked them for joining the call. The objective of the meeting was to inform everyone of the status of the analysis and what the Forest was working on. She said that Judge Winmill's <sup>1</sup> final order on the Payette case directs the Forest Service to be as transparent as possible in the remaining process, and to allow the opportunity for public comment on the work that has been done between draft and final. He also determined it is up to the Forest Service to determine what the appropriate course of action is between the draft and final supplemental environmental impact statement (DSEIS, FSEIS).

Pattie Soucek, Payette Bighorn Sheep Analysis team leader, reviewed the following information and responded to comments and questions.

### **Status of Analysis**

1. Alternative Formulation
  - Range of Alternatives have been developed using the new modeling/analysis information instead of the 2006 RADT and Payette Principles.

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<sup>1</sup> Judge B. Lynn Winmill, U.S. District Judge, Idaho

- New alternatives have been developed using the new population, foray and disease models (Alternatives L, M, N, O, and P). These will be shared in detail at the January 4, 2010 Combined Team Meeting (videoconference).
2. Analysis of Effects
    - Effects analysis is underway for bighorn sheep, range and economics
    - All models are completed and have been run (with the exception of the disease model for cumulative effects). All model runs and analysis will be done by January 4, 2010.
  3. Technical Reports
    - Drafts of all tech reports have been submitted to the writer/editor, with some in final form. All finals are due to the writer/editor by Wednesday, December 16.
    - The technical reports will be available for review January 4.
  4. Forest Plan Direction
    - Draft ideas have been captured and will be completed by the ID Team this week.
    - The proposed forest plan direction will be completed by January 4.
  5. Other items:
    - The statement of consistency/compliance with the HCNRA for the Wallowa Whitman National Forest will be completed by December 31.
    - A statement of best management practices will be completed by December 31.
    - The white paper on occupied habitat will be completed by January 4 and combined with the wildlife modeling tech report.

### **Court Rulings – Final judgment**

1. Per Judge Winmill's final order, the Draft Bighorn Sheep Viability SEIS does not need to be rewritten. The Forest Service can use reports or publications that mention either or both the 2006 RADT and Payette Principles so long as the articles do not exclusively use them to report findings or draw conclusions.
2. The Forest Service was instructed to maintain transparency and provide opportunities for public input.

### **Supplemental Report to the DSEIS**

1. The FS will release a supplemental report to the DSEIS for a 45-day public review and comment at the end of January 2010 (targeting January 25). The FS is not rewriting the whole DSEIS, simply providing a summary of the new analysis. Everything goes public at that point in time. The FS will be placing meeting notes, cooperator lists and MOUs on the Forest website.
2. Contains new information for:
  - New population, foray and disease models
  - Foray analysis replaces risk analysis previously used.
  - Effects Analysis of the new alternatives
  - Summer and winter habitat maps (new)
  - Technical reports for models

3. Developing combined biological technical report (economic technical report will be separate but still available).
  - This combined report will take the scientific/technical language and boil it down for public consumption. This document will become a chapter in the supplemental report (the complete technical reports will still be available)
4. Will include description of direct, indirect and cumulative effects for new alternatives. Cumulative effects will include a comparison of effects with/without domestic sheep grazing on BLM and Nez Perce National Forest lands. Cumulative effects will include domestic sheep grazing from private farm flocks (4) and other ownerships.
  - Team Comment: Run analysis with/without domestic sheep grazing on Carlson-owned lands
    - FS response: Will not single out an operator – analyze all or none.
  - Direct effects are dependent upon the current population level of BHS. Analyzing the current remnant depressed populations may under-represent effects. Seems like the FS could run the models at viable population levels.
    - FS response: Analyze for the foreseeable future only. Will use FP direction to address response to increasing BHS populations.

#### **Combined Team Meeting - January 4, 2010**

1. Videoconference – full day (time TBD)
2. Preview of the information in the supplemental report (still in draft form). The Team will not be able to see the documents before the January 4 meeting. The FS will do everything possible to enable the Team to see the content through the videoconference.
3. Will be looking at the 5 new alternatives, as well as proposed forest plan direction.
4. Purpose of the meeting – to roll out the info to the combined team so that they see it prior to public release. The Team can provide individual feedback at this meeting, but this feedback likely will not be incorporated in the document released January 25. Individual team members may also provide feedback during the 45-day comment period.
5. Timeline for getting FSEIS out:
  - Comment period on the supplemental report will run through March 12.
  - Planning on 4 public meetings during the first couple of weeks of February.
  - The FS will review and incorporate comments as appropriate, and release the final SEIS in April.
  - The FS expects to release its final decision in May.
  - In the meantime, all analysis-related documents will be uploaded on Website, including letters from the Oregon, Washington and Idaho Governors stating who represented them on the team, memorandums of understanding, and all meeting summaries.
  - The Combined team could come together again, but any meeting would have to be available to the public.
6. Team Comments

- How will the FS incorporate the outcomes of the Idaho Governor’s collaborative process?
  - FS response: Would be considered as new information. Without seeing what the State has, it is hard to determine the reaction it could result in.
- Will the FS identify a new preferred alternative with the supplemental report?
  - FS response: No new preferred alternative will be identified in supplemental report. The purpose of the report is to add new information developed between the draft and final SEIS. Alternative G will remain as the preferred alternative identified in the DSEIS.

**Action Items:**

1. The Forest Service will issue a public statement by the end of this week that describes their intent to prepare a supplemental report to the DSEIS and to provide a public review and comment opportunity for this document.
2. Pattie will send out an email to the Combined Team requesting RSVPs for the January 4 videoconference, and preferences for videoconference location. As of today, the following videoconference sites have been requested:
  - Enterprise (Vic)
  - UC Davis (Josh, Tim, Claire)
  - Clarkston (Frances, Christine)
  - La Grande (Craig?)
  - McCall (Dale, Keith, Payette folks)